

## Message Text

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43

ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9796

INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL KADUNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 5733

PASS USIA/IAA FOR DAWSON

PASS AID, FAA, FAS

BRUSSELS FOR FAA

KADUNA FOR AMBASSADOR EASUM

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AFSP, PFOR, NI

SUBJECT: FMG REQUISITON OF EMBASSY ANNEX

REF: A. STATE 142398, B. LAGOS 5676

1. SUMMARY: DCM AND ADMIN. COUNSELOR MET WITH FMG REPRESENTATIVES JUNE 18, MADE PRESENTATION PORPOSED REF. B, EXPLAINED NEED TO MAINTAIN MEA AS PRINCIPAL POINT OF CONTACT ON THIS MATTER AND TO PUT POSITIONS AND EXCHANGES ON OFFICIAL RECORD IN FORM OF DIPLOMATIC NOTES. FMG REPS UNDERSTOOD U. S. POSITION, BUT MIN. WORKS AND HOUSING PERMSEC. IGE IS NOT LOOKING FORWARD TO HAVE TO PASS THIS ON TO HIS COMMISSIONER. UPON RECEIPT DEPARTMENT'S ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS PARA'S 7-11 BELOW, EMBASSY WILL DRAFT NOTE TO MEA ON SUBJECT. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM AND ADMIN COUNSELOR PIPER MET WITH MIN. WORKS AND HOUSING  
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PERMSEC IGE, MEA PERMSEC IYALLA'S SPECIAL ASSISTANT SAGAY, MEA

PROTOCOL OFFICER MGBOJWERE, AND MIN. WORKS AND HOUSING ARCHITECT RELOVE JUNE 18. IGE OPENED THE MEETING, ASKING HOW EMBASSY PROPOSES PROCEED WITH MOVE FROM MOLONEY STREET ANNEX NOW THAT WE HAVE INSPECTED OKOTIE-EBOH PROPERTY. DCM TOLD IGE WE HAD REPORTED FINDINGS OF OKOTIE-EBOH INSPECTION TO WASHINGTON BUT HAD NO REPLY YET SO COULD NOT GIVE HIM SPECIFIC RESPONSE TO HIS QUESTIONS AT THE MOMENT. DCM THEN MADE POINTS OUTLINED PARAS 3, 3.A., 3.B., 3.C. AND 3.F. OF REF B.

3. DCM WENT ON TO SAY THAT WHILE WE HAD NO RESPONSE TO MESSAGE ON OKOTIE-EBOH INSPECTION, WE HAD RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM DEPARTMENT (REF A.) INSTRUCTING US TO DEAL WITH MEA AS PRIME CONTACT ON THIS MATTER; AS SUBJECT IS OF SIGNAL IMPORTANCE, AFFECTING RIGHTS AND IMMUNITIES OF U. S. DIPLOMATIC MISSION IN NIGERIA, OUR EXCHANGES ON THE SUBJECT SHOULD BE RECORDED IN OFFICIAL EMBASSY/MEA NOTES; EMBASSY WILL BE SENDING SUCH A NOTE IN NEXT DAY OR TWO. IGE AT FIRST TOOK UMBRAGE AT THIS, INTERPRETING US AS SEEKING TO CUT MIN. WORKS AND HOUSING OUT OF FURTHER DISCUSSIONS. DCM ASSURED HIM THAT WHILE WE ARE OBLIGED TO DEAL WITH MEA AS POINT OF OFFICIAL CONTACT, WORKS AND HOUSING IS CERTAINLY WELCOME IN ANY SUCH DISCUSSIONS. IGE UNDERSTOOD AND WAS MOLLIFIED.

4. IGE THEN RECAPITULATED POINTS DCM HAD MADE, PARA 2. ABOVE, CONCLUDING THAT AS HE HAD FEARED WE WERE (A) CALLING FOR EQUIVALENT QUARTERS, WHICH WAS UNREALISTIC; (B) EXPECTING FMG TO PAY ALL EXPENSES, WHICH COMMISSIONER FOR WORKS AND HOUSING BRIGADIER OBASANJO HAD SPECIFICALLY REJECTED, AND (C) WERE TALKING OF PREPARATIONS THAT WOULD TAKE TIME AND WOULD NOT MEET OBASANJO'S DEADLINE. DCM RESPONDED TO ABOVE POINTS AS FOLLOWS:

(A) WE ARE CERTAINLY NOT INSISTING ON EQUIVALENT QUARTERS, AS OKOTIE-EBOH IS DISTINCTLY INFERIOR TO MOLONEY ANNEX IN QUALITY, LAYOUT, FACILITIES AND CONVENIENCE. THERE ARE, HOWEVER, CERTAIN REQUIREMENTS SUCH AS TELEPHONES, POWER AND AIR CONDITIONING WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO THE PROPER FUNCTIONING OF MISSION OFFICES; IT IS OUR DUTY TO ENSURE PROPER FUNCTIONING AND THESE MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS MUST BE MET BEFORE WE COULD MOVE. SAGAY ASKED IF WE COULD AT LEAST MAKE TOKEN MOVE OF ONE OFFICE OR ONE DESK AS EARNEST OF OUR INTENTIONS. IGE SAID THERE IS CONFIDENTIAL

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ELECTRICITY AND SPACE AVAILABLE AT OKOTIE-EBOH NOW; MISSION COULD MOVE NOW AND INSTALL AIR CONDITIONING AND MAKE OTHER ARRANGEMENTS ON A RUNNING BASIS AS WE SETTLED IN. DCM SAID THIS WOULD DISRUPT RATHER THAN ENSURE PROPER FUNCTIONING OF OFFICES; ARRANGEMENTS WOULD NEED TO BE MADE AND READY BEFORE WE COULD LEAVE MOLONEY AND RELOCATE.

(B) WE DO EXPECT FMG TO BEAR ALL COSTS OF MOVE AND RENOVATION OF QUARTERS. MOVE WOULD BRING US NOTHING BUT INCONVENIENCE,

DISLOCATION, POORER QUARTERS; FMG IS THE PARTY WHO WOULD BENEFIT AND SHOULD BE THE ONE TO BEAR THE EXPENSES INVOLVED. (:) OBVIOUSLY, PREPARATIONS WILL TAKE TIME; ESTIMATES AND BIDS WILL BE INVOLVED, EQUIPMENT WILL HAVE TO BE ACQUIRED AND INSTALLED, AND DEADLINE OF A WEEK OR ANYTHING ON THAT ORDER IS UNREALISTIC. DCM ASSURED IGE, HOWEVER, THAT THIS IS NOT A STALL; WE ARE NOT PLAYING GAMES WITH FMG; DESPITE PROTECTION AFFORDED BY VIENNA CONVENTION, WE MEAN TO BE AS RESPONSIVE AS POSSIBLE IN MOVING WHAT OFFICES WE CAN FROM MOLONEY TO OKOTIE-EBOH. BUT THERE VERY REAL PROBLEMS OF LIMITATION OF SPACE, NEED FOR PHONES, ETC., WHICH MUST BE RESOLVED FIRST.

5. FMG ARCHITECT RELOVE MENTIONED POSSIBILITY OF CONSTRUCTION FO FOUR-STROY BUILDING ON VACANT SPACE AT OKOTIE-EBOH, PROVIDING ADDITIONAL 18,000 SQUARE FEET, AND THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF AVAILABILITY OF PREFAB UNITS THAT COULD BE USED FOR SUCH. PIPER THREW IN ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE FOR CONSIDERATION: IF FMG GAVE US VACANT LOT 14A NEXT TO NEW CHANCERY SITE ON VICTORIA ISLAND, WE MIGHT CONSTRUCT TEMPORARY QUARTERS THERE AT U. S. G. EXPENSE TO ACCOMMODATE ELEMENTS THAT WOULD NOT FIT IN OKOTIE-EBOH; LOT 14A COULD LATER BE USED FOR PARKING SPACE WHEN CHANCERY IS CONSTRUCTED.

6. IGE TERMINATED MEETING, SAYING HE DID NOT BELIEVE THERE WAS ANYTHING FURTHER WE COULD DO NOW; HE WOULD INFORM BRIGADIER OBASANJO, AND LATTER WOULD PURSUE THE MATTER WITH AMBASSADOR IN JUNE 24 MEETING.

7. COMMENT: WHILE FMG REPRESENTATIVES PUSHED HARD, TONE OF MEETING WAS UTTERLY DIFFERENT FROM JUNE 14 MEETING WITH OBASANJO. THESE WERE CIVIL SERVANTS WHO UNDERSTOOD OUR PROBLEMS AND POSITION. IGE OBVIOUSLY DID NOT RELISH HAVING TO REPORT THAT POSITION TO OBASANJO.  
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8. RE AMBASSADOR'S JUNE 24 MEETING WITH OBASANJO, WOULD IT BE POSSIBLE TO CONDUCT THE MEETING IN OBASANJO'S OFFICE, AS LATTER WILL BE SENIOR NIGERIAN OFFICER PRESENT? TO INSIST ON HIS GOING TO MEA FOR MEETING WOULD PROBABLY INFURIATE HIM, PARTICULARLY AS THIS IS MILITARY REGIME AND MEA IS CIVILIAN. WOULD NOT ENSHRINEMENT OF SUBSTANCE IN NOTES TO AND FROM MEA MEET REQUIREMENT THAT WE DEAL WITH MEA? (PARA 2. REF A)

9. RE RETENTION CONSULAR SECTION IN MOLONEY BUILDING (PARA 2.B., REFA), DOES DEPARTMENT VIEW THIS AS BARGAINING POSITION (PER PARE 5., REF B), OR DOES DEPARTMENT BELIEVE WE SHOULD INSIST ON IT IN ANY EVENT?

10. IN VIEW TREMENDEOUS INFLATION OF RENTS SINCE MOLONEY

CONTRACT SIGNED SIX YEARS AGO, WE DOUBT THAT CREDIT FOR ADVANCE RENT ON MOLONEY BUILDING WOULD BE CONVERTIBLE INTO SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER COMPENSATION (PARE 2.C., REF A), BUT WE CAN EXPLORE THIS AND TRY TO CHARGE AGAINST ONGOING OKOTIE-EBOH RENT BEYOND TERMINATION OF PRESENT MOLONEY CONTRACT (PARA 3.E., REF B).

11. SHOULD WE IN NOTE TO MEA INCLUDE CALL FOR PRORATED COMPENSATION OF 1973 USIS RENOVATION COSTS (PARA 3.D., REF B)?

12. ANY THOUGHTS ABOUT USE OF AID APARTMENT SOLUTION (PARA 5., REFB) AS BARGAINING PLOY?

13. UPON RECEIPT DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO PARAS 7-11 ABOVE, WE WILL DRAFT NOT TO MEA. WOULD BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL IF WE COULD ALSO INCLUDE WASHINGTON REACTION TO OUR REPORT ON CONDITION OF OKOTIE-EBOH PROPERTY, IF THIS IS FORTHCOMING IN TIME.

14. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE WASHINGTON COMMENT ON PROPOSED SPLITTING OF USIS OPERATION AND FURTHER FRACTURING OF ADMIN FUNCTIONS (PARA 5. REF B).

15. WE GREATLY APPRECIATE HELPFUL DEPARTMENT RESPONSE AND ARE GRATIFIED WE ARE SO MUCH ON SAME WAVELENGTH.  
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## Message Attributes

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